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* " F R E N C H P R E F E R E D " *
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* Property of Johnnie Speer. *
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Breaking into Society

CAST

MA WINNEGAR OLD LADY CHARACTER
 MARJORIE INGENUE
 SALLY LEAD
 PA WINNEGAR CHARACTER
 TOBY COMEDY
 PIERRE LEMAIRE HEAVY

SETTING

Fancy interior C. D. and Doors L. and R.

PROPS

Vase
 Table
 Telephone
 Two necklaces

MA WINNEGAR

(ENTERS C. D.) Belmont 3910. Give me the Central Employment Agency. Hello. (VERY AFFECTED TRYING TO ACT HIGH SOCIETY AND CAN'T) This is Mrs. Kerr Winnegar. Vanderbiltomore place. I would like for you to send me a French maid. Yes indeed. She must be a real French maid from Paris. I am very particular about that. Very well--send one at once. (DURING THIS SPEECH EZRA WINNEGAR HAS ENTERED AND STANDS LISTENING TO MA WITH AMUSEMENT. HE SMOKES A CORN COB PIPE)

PA WINNEGAR

What 'dye doin', Ma, gettin' another one of them French maids?

MA WINNEGAR

Yes I am getting another French maid, and how many times have I told you not to call me Ma -it isn't cultured like, and --put that pipe out. Give it to me. (TAKES PIPE AWAY FROM HIM)

PA WINNEGAR

Aw, Ma, give me my pipe now---durn it. I can't smoke them dude cigarettes, you know I can't.

MA WINNGER

Then you shall smoke nothing at all. The idea of a man expecting society to recognize him as a gentleman and he still retains his small town habits--such as corn cob smoking.

PA

You durn right. I don't give a darn if we have got money---it aint no reason why I shou d be robbed of my good old corn bob.

ma

Suffieient reason is that it isn't done any more. Oh, Ezra, do you want to be a disgrace to me and Marjorie all of the time. Don't you know that your daughter is talented--and that she can't have parents she's ashamed of. (MARJORIE SINGS OFF STAGE VERY HIGH SOPRANA Listen. Hasn't she got a beautiful voice. Oh she'll be in opera some day.

PA

Opera. Sounds like she's in an operation.

MA

Oh you couldn't appreciate good music. Honestly, Ezra Winnegar, you don't deserve the good luck you had--

PA

Good Luck--where do you figure I've had any good luck, Ma?

MA

Don't call me Ma---You've had plenty of good luck. Don't you call it good luck that they discovered iron ore on that worthless farm we lived on for fifteen years--don't you call it good luck that in less than two months we were elevated from almost poverty to the vast riches we now have? Don't you call it good luck that we are not living in that dinky one horse town of MillDale, but in a beautiful home in New York---amongst society,----amongst the nobility--the crowned heads.

PA

Nope--I'd rather b

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back in good old Milldale amongst the liver stable gang--the rough necks--and the bald heads.

Ma

I expected you to say that. You and your son, Toby, are absolutely hopeless. I'm just about going to give up trying to make anything out of either one of you. (NOISE OFF STAGE TOBY IN ADLIBB ARGUMENT WITH BUTLER) Mercy. What's that? It's Toby having a fight with some one.

TOBY

(OFF STAGE AND THEN ENTERING C. DOOR STANDS TALKING OFF) Now get out and stay out, and Frenchie if you ever try to undress me again, I'll knock your damn head off.

PA

What's the matter, son?

TOBY

Aw, that dad burned French falet Ma went and hired. He was trying to take my pants off.

MA

Toby!

TOBY

He was by gosh. Them dad burned French men try some of the darndest things. He said that's what he was hired for was to dress and undress Pa and me.

MA

Why certainly all gentlemen of society have valets. And most of them have Frenchmen because they make the vbest and are more 'toute effete'

TOBY

Well, I don't give a durn, when any man comes up to me and starts takin' my pants down I get suspicious, and I just socked him in the nose. He said he was goin' to give me a bath. I told him I could take my own baths when I needed them--the darn fool--it was n't even Saturday either. By gosh Pa, do you blame me for hittin' him?

PA

No, I don't, son---I wouldn't stand for no man dressin' and undressin me, I should say not.

TOBY

Of course now, Ma, if you want to get a nice French maid to dress and undress Pa and me that's different, aint it, Pa?

PA

You bet it is, Toby.

MA

What. You old monkey---you ever let me catch you getting fresh with any French maid, and I'll tear you limb from limb. I think that is the reason I lost the last maid we had--you or Toby must have done something to her.

TOBY

I didn't do nothin' to her, ma but Pa did--

PA

Toby, shut up. Do you want to get me killed?

MA

Oh ho---as I thought. Toby, what did your father do to the last maid?

TOBY

Gosh, I can't tell you, Ma---Pa give me ten dollars not to tell.

PA

Toby, will you leave the room. Drun it all you always got to spill the beans. I'll swear everything that boy sees or hears he tells.

TOBY

Well, I didn't go to---Gosh I just forget, Pa. Don't worry, I aint gonna tell Ma waht you two waad doin' in the hall-and--

PA

Toby!

MA

So tha t's the kind of goings on that you do, is it, Ezra. Well, I'll see that the next maid doesn't leave on account of you. You disgraceful old fool.

MARJORIE

(ENTERS L.) What's the matter, Mother? Has Father been breaking some more of the rules of society.

MA

That's all he does do--is break rules and murder the English language He aint got no bringing' up at all.

MARJORIE

(LAUGHS) Oh, Mot er, that's not very good english you're using your-self now. I hope you're not offended if I correct you are you, Mother dear.

MA

(PUTTING ARMS AROUND HER) Oh of course not, darling, for I know you've had a lot better education than any of us. I only went to the eighth grade when I was girl. But you've been through a finishing school.

PA

I sholdd say she has--and the money it cost would just about finish an ordinary bank roll. Good thing there's plenty of iron ore on my farm.

TOBY

That's what I say. By gosh ma, you've spent enough money on Marjorie' education to make her smarter than all the Presidents in the United States. My gosh if you'd spent that much money qndme I'd be smart too. She goes to finishing school, has music lessons, and art lesson, and this kind of a lesson and that kind of a lesson--and you won't let me go to the School for Deteatiidetectives. even.

MA

Oh, Toby, there's no use putting money on your education--because you and your pa couldn't be changed if you went to school for the rest of your lives. Besides I don'

t want

any detectives in the family.

TOBY

Well, let me be a bootlegger then. I'd like to be something. Say, Marjorie, here's a letter fror you from Cal Henderson back in Milldal (STARTS TO HAND IT TO HER)

MA

Cal Henderson. (TAKES LETTER) Give me that. I don't want Marjorie recieving silly love letters from that country ~~klunk~~ rube. He'll be wanting Marjorie to marry him again---and it's best that she just forgets him. (TEARS LETTER UP)

MARJORIE

Oh, Mother, why don't you at least let me read the letter from Cal?

MA

No indeed. Remember, Marjorie, Cal has no place in your life. You are going to be a great Opera singer, and marriage would spoil it for you. At least a marriage with a nobody like Cal Henderson would. I must write him and tell him never to send any more letters here to yo

TOBY

Aw, Ma, that aint right. Cal really loves Marjorie, and she ought to marry a man like him'cause they aint no better man this side of the Missouri River.

MA

Enough. I know what is best for Marjorie.. You and your father hustle upstairs and get dressed. We are going to The Ritz tonight. We are going with the Van Dusens,

TOBY

Well, I aint. I aint goin' nowhere with those society people.

MARJORIE

Toby, shame on you. That's not good Grammar.

MA

Of course it aint. The idea of saying, aint. Zaint I told you befor

MARJORIE

Toby, don't you know that you should not say I aint going ~~ouny~~ where with those people.

MA

Of course not Youshould, say, "I am not going any where with those people"-

MARJORIE

Yes, that's right. I am not going anywhere with those poeple. Yooo We are not going any where with those people. You are not going anywhere with those people.

MA

Why of course that's the way to talk proper like. I am not going any where with those pople. We are not going any where with those people. You are not notgoing any where with those poeple. Now do you understand, Toby?

TOBY

Sure.

Well, what is it?

TOBY

They aint none of us goin' now where with those people. (EXITS)

**** NUMBER ONE *****

SALLY

(ENTERS C. D.) Well, well, so this is the home of Mrs. Kerr Winnegar. Another hay seed from the country who has made a little dough quick and now thinks she can crash the gates of the new York social registe. She called up the Employment Agency and told them to send her a French Maid---well, I'm not French, but I need a job---and if I can make her think I'm French --what's the difference. I managed to get by the butler, and now for my try to get the job. (MRS. WINNEGAR OFF STAGE HEARD ARGUING WITH PA) That must be the old dame now---I wonder if I can think of any French?

MA

(ENTERS L) Oh I was never so---(SEES SALLY) I beg your pardon, whom have I the pleasure--

SALLY

You have the pleasure of lookin' at me---Sally---I mean Marie De Cognac, if you call that a pleasure. I came from the Employment Agency. You wanted a maid.

MA

Indeed---and are you French?

SALLY

You tell 'em--I mean we we, madamoiselle. I come from Paris. Oo la la.

MA

Well, I want a French maid---it seems that the better class of people ~~want~~ approve of French maids and waiters, so I of course must have one. You speak French of course.

SALLY

Le--Polly Vou--oo la la Wee wee. (ASIDE) I hope that's French.

MA

Well, I guess you'll do. Of course you know your duties. You are to take care of my social engagements---you will announce people in my home--dress me and my daughter---and make you self generally useful--but one thing I want to warn you--I have a husband--and you must leave him alone.

SALLY

That's what they all say.

MA

Hump. I see that you speak English very good.

SALLY

Oh yes, Madammoisle---I speak ze Engleesh, and se French too. Do you speak French?

MA

Well, I speak a little bit.

SALLY
It's a good thing you don't know too much about it.

MA
What?

SALLY
Oh I mean-- I'mmsorry you don't know so much about it! Ze French is ze lovely language.

MA
Oh yes--well, Marie--I may as well confess to you now that you are in my employ. you see I don't speak verymuch French, but to be in society one has to know a good deal about it. Now that's one reason I've hired a French Maid. I want you to teach me what you know about French.

SALLY
Oh I will--and that won't take long.

MA
What?

SALLY
I say if you're smart---it won't take long. (SMILES AT HER)

SALMA
Very well, Marie---I'll go now and tell the house-keeper to have your room fixed. Then I must have you dress me for I'm going to the Van Duesen Dawnde tonight. I love to dawnce. (EMITS L.)

SALLY
Oh so sh's loves to dawnce. Gee. Aint life funny. People make money from a little farm in the sticks, then they turn up their noses at the very place they made their dough in, and affect such society airs as that poor old woman tries to put on. Oh well, I've landed the job---and I'll be able to keep it if somebody don't know too much about French.

TOBY
(ENTERS WITH PA) Doggone it, pa, I didn't mean to get you in trouble with ma, I--(SEES SALLY) Oh boy---look what the cat drug in.

PA
Well, who 's this?

SALLY
What's it to ya?

PA
Well, it might be a whole lot. This happens to be my home, young woman---I'M--

SALLY
(ASIDE) Oh the boss---(TURNS TO HIM AND BOWS) Well, M'sieur? I'm ze Maid.

TBOY
Oh it's the new Maid--aint she nice?

PA
I'll say she is. She's a humdinger.

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TOBY
(LOOKS AT HER) Seems to me I've seen her face some where before.

SALLY
Oh, M'Sier I always have ze same face wiz me. Ze Polly Bou Cuckoo.

PA
Who's a cuckoo?

TOBY
N o, Pa, she's talkin' French. Listen, Pa, if you had a little more technizue you could a got that last maid to give you a kiss---you got to talk French to these French gals. Here's ma's French Dictiona Let me see if I can find a phase that will ask her for something.

PA
(TO TOBY) What do you say in French when you want a kiss?

TOBY
I don't know--but I know what ma would say in English if she ever caught you gettin' a kiss. Here's one Say this to her and see what you get. "Le Polly Vou Une Ooosekey umscrey de we we.

PA
I say Frenchie, Le Polly vou une ooosekey umscrey de we we?

SALLY
(SLAPS HIM) Sure, old billy goat!

TOBY
I must a got the wrong words. Let me see. (GOES TO SALLY) Ooo la Le Pigeon Amato De shoo shoo ?

SALLY
(SMILES TICKLES HIM UNDER THE CHIN) We we---m' sieur.

TOBY
Oh boy. You see pa it's all in your technique. Oh boy I'm gonna like this French maid.

MA
(ENTERS L. WITH A LETTER) Oh, Marjorie, Where's Ma rjorie I've gotten a letter for her. (SEES THEM) Oh I see you've been getting acquan te with the new maid.^{1/2}

TOBY
Yep Pa and me just broke her in.

PA
Toby, shut up.

Ma
Marie, you must not pay any attention to these two---they are not properly trained yet. They've been in the country for a long time. What did my husband do to you?

TOBY
Nothin', ma, he just asked her for some oosekey umscrey and she socked hell out of him.

MA
So he did well ill attend to him.

PA

Toby, if you don't keep your trap shut you're gonna get me killed some day. Who'd you say you got a letter from Mom?

MA

It's from a great Opera singer and teacher of music. He is going take over Marjorie's career and put her on the Metropolitan. Where is she? Marjorie? Marjorie.

MARJORIE

(ENTERS R.) What is it, Mother?

MA

Darling I've just gotten a letter from Pierre Lemaire --the--

SALLY

(STARTS) Pierre Lemaire--the--

MA

(SURPRISED) Why, Marie, do you know him?

SALLY

Oh--er--no no not personally. Sahll I get to my room madam? Wee wee thank you. (EXITS L. BOWING)

MA

Just think Marjorie the great Pierre Lemairre whom they say used to be a Count or nobleman in the old country is going to be your teacher. And he only wants five thousand dollars a week for doing it.

PA

Five thousand dollars? My Lord Ma, that's too much money.

MA

Five thousand dollars too much money to bring Marjorie's voice out? I should say it is not. He's coming here today and may arrive soon Marjorie, wouldn't it be wonderful if he would want to marry you.

TOBY

If that Frenchman tries to marry my Sis, I'll sock him one in the jaw. Marjorie's going to marry Cal Henderson back home. She said she would.

MA

Ridiculous! Marjorie can't give up her career for Cal Henderson. Marjorie, you never said any such thing did you?

MARJORIE

Well--er--mother---I did---sort of promise Cal that after I had made a name for myself in opera I would marry him,

MA

How impossible. You must forget it. After you have made a name for yourself thousands of wealthy men of position and social prominence will want you for their wives.

KIMBORD TOBY

Well, they aint gonna get here. I told my friend Cal Henderson that Marjorie was goin' to marry him, and she is if I have to carry her to the alter with me myself.

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MA

Toby, I am seeing to Marjorie's career not you. (BELL RINGS) Listen that may be the great Lemaire. Oh I'm so thrilled.

Toby

I don't see what they're is to gettin' thrilled over them darn French with their funny ways. I hope this one don't try no funny stuff!

LEMAIRE

(OFF STAGE) Ah I fine ze way. Ze gran' madamoselle. .and madam ze expect me. (ENTERS C. D.) We we Madam, I am here. (BOWS)

MA

Ah, M'sieur Lemaire it is the grand pleasure to meet such a distingui personage. Allow me to present my daughter, Marjorie whom you are to instruct in voice.

LEMAIRE

We we she is ze charming. (KISSES HER HAND) I am so pleased soon I will teach you to sing like ze mocking bird. Twweett tweett.

MA

Now M'sieur Lemaire I want you to meet my husband and my son Toby.

LEMAIRE

Oh ze gran' M'sisire's I am ze charmed. Toot Sweet. (KISSES PA QUICKLY AND STARTS FOR TOBY)

TOBY

(DRAWS BACK) Get away or I'll let you have it. I will by gosh. Don't never try to kiss me---This guys worse than that French valet we had---he tried to take my pants down.

MA

Toby, you hush yourself. M'sieur Lemaire my daughter will show you to your room, and then I want you and her to get ~~rkghkdkdkdkdkdkdkdkdkdk~~ started as quick as you can upon her career.

LEMAIRE

Ah, madam, when I get through with her career, nobody will know it.

TOBY

I'll bet they won't either.

LEMAIRE

I shall bring music from it that was never heard before.

TOBY

I'll bet he's a flute player!

LEMAIRE

Ah soon madam, your daughter will be on the stage--she will sing tra la lala.

TOBY

I'll bet she won't be as good as that gal pa and me saw at the Burlesque show the other day.

PA

Toby, shut up.

MA

So that's what you've been doing. Listen, Ezra, I'm going to lock you

you up in your room, and not let you out if you don't stop going to those vulgar shows.

TOBY

This weren't no vulgar show, Ma, this was a burlesque show. Boy, there was one gal come out on that stage and stood over a runway right over pa and me, and she started shakin' her ukelee and pa sweat down a rubber collar in two minutes ma.

MA

That's enough. Marjorie, show ~~me~~ M'sieur Lemaire the way to his room. (THEY EXIT) And as for yoy, Ezra, I don't want to hear any more about your going to burlesque shows. (EXITS)

TOBY

You won't, ma? I aint supposed to tell that time. Gee it slipped again pa.

PA

Toby, I've got a sledge hammer I'm gonna let slip on your head if you don't quit gettin' me in trouble. Now darn it all keep your mouth shut. (EXITS)

TOBY

Maybe that's what I ought to do--be one of those silent kind of guys--Well, I'm gonna keep my mouth shut--and my eyes open--because that French dude that's come here don't look to me like he means well by any of us. (EXITS R.)

***** NUMBER TWO *****

PA

(AS MARJORIE SINGS OFF STAGE LOUD OPERA VOICE) Lord! That screechin' is gettin' on my nerves. If they call that singin' give me somethin' that aint. (MA ENTERS WITH HIM)

MA

You old unappreciative gorilla. That French man is making her voice come out as I've never heard it before. Oh I think he so wonderful. He just thrills me death. (MARJORIE SINGS AGAIN REAL LOUD)

TOBY

(ENTERS AND HOWLS LIKE A DOG) Boy! Marjorie's voice is gonna be good for calling fish yet.

PA

That's what I say. I think its a lot of darn nonsense, and , Ma, this spendin' money the way you have has got to stop. I got a letter today and from what I hear they've stopped mining on our place--they say that it is running out. Now we've just got so much in the bank--

MA

Don't be bothering me about financial affairs, Ezra---I've got to arrange for my daughter's reception. You know I'm giving a grand coming out affair for her and her voice. It's to be the most elegant thing this year in society.

PA

Well, I guess you'll have to excuse me---I've got to go to town*--

TOBY

I'll be with you in a minute, Pa---we're going to the burlesque show aint we? oh gee--I wasn't supposed to say that.

There you go again--spoilin' it for me, Toby.

MA

So that's where you wanted to go is it. Now you old buzzard, get your self up stairs and get ready to meet my guests. You come right along with me. (TAKES PA OUT BY THE EAR R.)

PA

(AS HE GOES OUT) See what you done, Toby.

TOBY

Doggone I'm always puttin' my foot in it. I wanted to go with pa and see that show too. I wanted to see that gal with the Thousand Wiggles, now I guess I'll have to stay at home and--maybe I can get a little fun out of that new french maid. She's a swell baby. (SALLY ENTERS R. AND STARTS ACROSS STAGE) Hello, cutie--say--

SALLY

Don't bother me--I'm busy---Small change.

TOBY

Small change--where'd you learn all them American Expressions if you just come from France. Strikes me you can talk pretty good English

SALLY

We we M'sieur I dare say better than you can. Were you wever in Paris

TOBY

No, and I don't think you were either. There's another thing I want to ask you. Why did you start when Mom said that Peirre Lemaire was coming here. Have you seen him?

SALLY

No---I--I wouldn't --even know him, I don't suppose. Why do you ask me such personal questions?

TOBY

I've seen you some where before, kid, and I can't figure it out. But I will before long----I've seen your face, but I don't know where to put it--

SALLY

Well, how would you like to shove it up your---?

TOBY

Now that aint French expression. (GIVES A STARTLED LOOK FIRST THEN EXITS)

SALLY

Oh, I've got to watch myself or I'm going to get in wrong here.

LEMAIRE

(ENTERS L.) Sally! Sally, what are you doing here?

SALLY

I might say, what are you doing here, you rat?

LEMAIRE

Don't try that stuff on me. You know why I'm here. I'm here to get my fingers on some of this easy dough these country yokels have got. (LAUGHS) So you've turned out to be a maid since you left me. Well, you always did believe in earning an honest living.

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SALLY
Yes, and I'm proud of it. Oh, I've had many a hard knock since I pulled away from you and dirty schemes, but I've managed to get this job and now I'm going straight.

LEMAIRE
That's O. K. with me--just as long as you don't interfere with me. I've got a good racket here---I'm making the old lady think I can train her daughter's voice. I get a thousand dollars a week for that, and in the mean time I'm picking up little bits of jewelery that I find laying around. Before I get through with them I'll make them feel flatter than the proverbial pancake. Say you can work with me if you--

SALLY
No, I don't want to work with you. I told you I was through, and I meant, and you'd better get a way from here or I'll--

LEMAIRE
You little she-cat---if I catch you squeeling on me, I'll tell what I know about you and you'll go up the river so fast you'll be dizzy.

SALLY
Oh--I--I hope they catch you with the goods on you. I do! I do!

LEMAIRE
They won't. I'm too smart for that. (TAKES OUT A NECKLACE) Here's a pearl necklace I just lifted off of the old lady. It's worth plenty of money. I'm going to put it in this vase. (PUTS IT IN VASE) When I get a chance I'll sneak it out and put it in the hands of those who can handle it. Remember you---if you squeel on me, I've got the stuff to send you over the road and I'll do it. Get me? You've never seen me in your life before---and as far as you are concerned I'm the great French Opera singer Pierre Lemaire. (LAUGHS AND EXITS R.)

SALLY
Oh what I am to do? I don't want to see these people lose their belongings. But still I can do nothing. I need this job here and if I help them I'll go to jail. Well, thank heaven no one heard the conversation that we two just had. (EXITS L.)

TOBY
(ENTERS C.) The hell they didn't! (GOES OVER TO VASE) (TAKES OUT PEARLS) I knew I might learn something if I kept my eyes and ears open.

***** NUMBER THREE *****
***** (TOBY OVERHEARS ALL THIS)

MA WINNEGAR
(ENTERS WITH LEMAI RE) Oh, M'sieur Lemaire, you just thrill me death. I think you are the most wonderful man I ever met.

LEMAIRE
Ah, madame allow me to repay ze compliment by saying you are ze most gracious most most wonderful tout---effete bon le-mate'

MA WINGGER
(GIGGLES) Oh I don't know what all of that is, but I guess I must be it. Now what is it you were saying about getting my daughter on the stage at the Metropolitan.

LEMAIRE
Well, madame, it will cost you about fifteen thousand for me to sqing ze deal as you call heem---but for zat sum I am sure I can get her ze grand opening night at ze opera house--and with her marvelous voice

(ENTERS) We we, madam?

MARIE SALLY

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MA

Marie, I've been missing jewelry here the last few days. I have just missed a very valuable necklace--where is?

MA SALLY

Why does madam, suspect me---I am not ZE only one in ze house.

MA

How dare you intimate that anyone wise in this house is a thief! There is no else who would steal, and I must either have that jewelry returned to me at once or I'll be forced to send you to jail. Are you going to give them to me?

SALLY

I can't!

MA

Very well then I must call the authorities! (STARTS)

TOBY

Wait a minute ma. Sally is not the thief.

MA

sally? Her name is Marie.

TOBY

Bushwa. She aint no more a French maid then I am. Don't get scared, kid, I overheard the conversation you had with this big fourflushing crook, here---and he is the one that stole ma's jewelry. And the only reason now he wants the fifteen thousand is so he can take it and leave here. He's here just to play us for saps.

LEMAIRE

Why you--(REACHES IN BACK POCKET)

TOBY

(HAND IN POCKET) Don't reach for no gun. I've got you covered.

LEMAIRE

Fool, I have no gun. (TAKES OUT HANKERCHIEF)

TOBY

(TAKES HAND OUT OF POCKET) Well, then neither have I! But don't think I aint got your number---and you aint no Frenchman either.

MA

Toby, I'll not allow you to insult Peirre Lemaire like this. I trust him and to show you that I do I'll give him the fifteen thousand--

PA

You can't do it ma---because we haven't got fifteen thousand dollars to our name.

MA

What are you talking about. The iron ore on our place back home is worth millions.

PA

Notwerth a damn cent. It's time you knew what's what, Ma. Cal Henderson owns that ironore---and the mine is on his land which is

MA

Now then you want me to write you a check for fifteen thousand, is tha all? Well, I'm sure I can do that easily. I call my husband and try to make him understand. He's a very difficult man to understand--- M'sieur---he is so uncouth unclutured you know--

LEMAIRE

Ah yes -I understan'--not at all like you--is ee, madame? Ah, madam if your husband does not treat you right perhaps I had better carry you away to France with me--- (PUTS ARMS AROUND HER)

MA

(ALL FLUSTERED) Oh don't you do that! I'm liable to give in. I've heard all about what great lovers you Frenchmen are---You so much finesse.

LEMAIRE

(STRAIS HER NECKLACE FROM AROUND HER NECK) Ah, madame, Pierre Lemaire could learn to love you---eh--toot sweet! I kees your face, I kiss you nose, I kiss your hand---I kiss your oo la la! (BENDS DOWN ON KNEE

MA

Don't you do it! I couldn't stand it. (JUMPS AWAY) (LEMAIRE PUTS NECKLACE IN VASE) (TOBY WAITS TILL HE TURNS HIS BACK THEN TAKES IT OUT I'll go and call the old man. (CALLS) Pa! Oh, Pa! Come here. (PA ENTERS) Listen, I want you to write out a check for fifteen thousand dollars. Peirre Lemaire is going to put our daughter on the stage now.

PA

And he wants fifteen thousand dollars for doing it? Say what the hell do you two think money is---do you think it grows on trees--do you--

MA

Don't talk back to me---give me a check for fifteen thousand dollars--

PA

Listen, Ma, I can't do it. We aint got all the money in the world--we-- I aint gonna do it. Now I've just got to set my foot down on you.

MA

Very well, then I shall be forced to pawn my jewlery. I'll pawn this necklace--I--(REACHES FOR HER NECK) My necklace is gone!

PA

Yes---and my diamond studded watch is gone. Slnething's funny around this house --I had a hundred dollar bill on my dresser last night and it was gone--this morning--I--

MA

I can't understand where my necklace could have gone. I know I put it on.

LEMAIRE

Perhaps ze madame has dropped it. Then too---these maids that you peopl hire from ze employment agency---often have been known to be zee light fingered, eh?

MA

That's who done it. That new maid, Marie. I'll call her . Marie. Marie. Come here.

right next to ours. He has been giving us all the money that 15
you've been spending trying to break into society. He only done it
just to let you have a taste of what New York was like

MA

Oh, I can't believe it! I can't believe it. We're poor and he is rich?

PA

Yep. I just got a letter from him today, and he told me that it was
time we cut out the foolishness and let you know what's what. Now
instead of trying to get Marjorie on the Metropolitan opera stage you
better be gettin' her back to Cal Henderson, the man she loves, so she
can start on a real career--of raisin' kids.

MA

Oh what a fool--what a fool I've been! The guests are assembling for
Marjorie's coming out--party--and I can't face them now---oh what will
I say* to them.

TOBY

I'll get rid of them, Ma. (GHOST TO C. D.) Hey, all you bohunks---get
your duds on and beat it--we aint got no more money---so there won't
be no eats---we're goin' back to Milldale. Come on in here, Marjorie.

MARJOIRE

(ENTERS C. D.) Is the jig up, Toby? Does Mother know everything?

MA

Oh, Marjorie, we haven't got a cent--it was all that farmer Cal Hendrso
---th nk Marjorie---you won't be able to sing at the Metropolitan, and
I won't get to be in society---(CRIES) Cal Henderson's got everything.

MARJORIE

Don't cry--mother about me---I don't think I'd ever make a singer any
way.

MA

Marjorie---Cal Henderson has got all the money---Marjroire --I believe
he is just the man you should marry. You'd better marry him.

MARJORIE

Don't worry Mother---I've been married to Cal Henderson ever since we
left Milldale.

MA

What?

MARJORIE

Yes---Cal Henderson knew that you would never be satisfied until you
had tried to make a singer out of me and married me off to some body
in society---so he just let you think that you had struck iron ore
on your place--and he's been furnishing the money all the time.

LEMAIRE

Well, since you people no longer have any money---I do not believe my
services are required. I'll say good day.

TOBY

Yes---you'd better be going---and don't try to make love to my ma any
more will you not.

PA

Make love to her---T
ob

did he make love to the old woman.

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GOBY

Pa, I caught him just poruin' it on her.

MA

Oh he was not---Toby, you shut your mouth. I've been a silly old fool. Mr. Lemaire, did you steal my jewelery?

LEMAIRE

You old hag, what if I did?

MA

Who you callin' an old hag. Listen get your things out of this house right now---beat it. you poor excuse for a human being.

LEMAIRE

Very well I'm going---(TAKES VASE) I admire this vase, I believe I'll take it with me. (GOES TO C. D. QUICKLY)

TOBY

No use takin' it, Frenchie---I took the pearls out of it! (SHOWS THEM)

LEMAIRE

What you---give me those---

TOBY

Nothin' doin'. Now I want to give you a little advice you get out of here, and stay out--and don't ever let me hear of you botherin' this little girl either-- ' cause I heard how you tried to make a crook out of her, and then threatned to tell on her. But now if you sq ueel about her, I'll sq ueel about you.

LEMAIRE

(BOWS) Bon jour, M'suire.

TOBY

What's that?

LEMAIRE

I believe that 's good bye in French.

TOBY

Well, Carbolie acid---that's good bye in any language--now beat it. (HE EXITS) Well, now I guess it's back to the good old Town of Milldale for us aint it. (SALLY STARTS TO GO) Hey where you goin'?

SALLY

I guess there's no where for me to go but wasy from here, but I must thank you for all you 've doene. Toby.

TOBY

Hey tha t aint no way to do--leave me after I helped you out. I though maybe you might marry me and come back to Milldale, with me Sally.

SALLY

I'd love to.

TOBY

Come into camp then ,kid---My Sally.

MA

And all the time I thought she was a fre

TOBY

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The nearest she ever come to an y thing Feen was a cream puff one time. I thought I knew her---she come from the same country we did---she's just a plain old sow belly Missourian, aint ya? Anybody could pull the wool over your eyes ma. Even pa can do it.

MA

Well, he won't do it again. I'm going to take him right back to Milldale--where there aren't any burlesque shows for him to fall in love with the naked women.

PA

Huh? Me? How about yourself, Ma, you let that French make love to you, didn't you?

MA

Yes, but he didn't get anything.

TOBY

The devil he didn't. He was tryin' to kiss her on the oo la la!

MA

Now hush, Toby--you don't have to tell everything you know. The best thing for all of us to do is go get out of here as quick as we can.

TOBY

I'll say, Ma, and don't worry about that eee- Pa bein' bothered with that cootch dancer at the show---'cause I guess they're gonna kill her.

PA

Who said they was gonna kill her?

TOBY

You did yourself, Pa. I guess they're gonna cut her up with an axe or something.

MA

Why, Toby, how did you know?

TOBY

Well, I heard Pa say the other day that he sure would like to have a piece of the t! (MA CHASES PA OFF STAGE)

***** NUNK *****

F I N A L E